(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The 4-laning of Delhi-Jallandhar Section is in progress. Delhi-Murthal is already 4-lane. Four laning work between Murthal and Karnal is in progress and is likely to be completed by December, 1995. Four laning work between Karnal to Ambala and then to Sirhind has been approved and is targetted to be completed by June, 1998. The work of 4-laning between Sirhind and Jallandhar has been completed recently.

Improving National Highways Network

2483. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Highways network constitutes less than two per cent of total road network but carries nearly 40% of total road traffic;

(b) if so, what steps Government are contemplating to improve the National Highways network keeping in view the future traffic expansion; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to finance massive investment required for upgrading road condition in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir. The National Highways broadly constitute 2% of the total road network in the country but carry about 40% of the road traffic.

(b) Development of National Highways including widening/strengthening etc. is a continuous process and developmental works are taken up keeping in view the traffic intensity, *inter-se* priority of works, overall availability of funds etc.

(c) Certain projects have already been taken up by way of financing under overseas loan assistance programme in various States in the high density traffic corridors. In addition, Private Sector participation in the Highway Sector on BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) basis is being contemplated.

Development of Tuticorin Port

2484. SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are contemplating to develop the Tuticorin Port which was declared as a Major Port two decades ago;

(b) whether following facilities are presently available at the Tuticorin Port:

(i) Terminal capacity for transhipment of containers, and facility to handle bigger fourth generation container vessels,

(ii) Enough depth (in the approach channel) to enable vessels having more than 27 feet draught to enter the port and whether feasibility report has been submitted in this regard;

(iii) Night navigation facilities,

(c) whether the Tuticorin Port is to be declared as a Free Port; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (i) No exclusive Container Berths are available at Tuticorin Port. Container Vessels are handled at the existing General Cargo Berths. Transhipment Containers are handled with the help of top-lift trucks. For stacking Containers, back up area adjoining to berths and open yard are available. There are no facilities to handle bigger fourth generation Container Vessels.

(ii) No, Sir. A feasibility report for deepening of the channel and the basin has been received from the port, but no investment decision has been taken.

(iii) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

DTC Bus Services between Nauroji Nagar to Central Terminal

2485. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of DTC buses plying between Nauroji Nagar to Central Secretariat via B-Avenue, New Delhi, Number-wise and time-table-wise details;

(b) whether it is a fact that very limited number of buses are plying between the said route and Government had withdrawn the bus route No. 570;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the above bus is running very irregularly;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether Government have any proposal to introduce more bus services in the said route; and

(f) if so, by when, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) Route No. 570 (Peak Time Service) is operating from Nauroji Nagar to Central Secretariat via B-Avenue. Three trips at 0836 hrs., 0924 hrs. and 0948 hrs. are operated from Nauroji Nagar to Central Secretariat and three trips at 1736 hrs. from Central Secretariat